

Week Ending Friday, November 28, 2003

**Statement on the 40th Anniversary of
the Death of President**

John F. Kennedy

November 21, 2003

This weekend the American people turn our thoughts to images of 40 years ago and to the good and graceful life that ended on November 22, 1963. John F. Kennedy has been gone nearly as long as he lived, yet the memory of him still brings pride to our Nation and a feeling of loss that defies the passing of years.

We remember a man who welcomed great responsibilities and had a gift for awakening the idealism and sense of duty in others. We remember a leader who called our Nation to high purpose and saw America through grave dangers with calm, discernment, and personal courage. We recall, with much affection and respect, the charming and dignified manner that became familiar to us all in the years of President Kennedy's service.

On this day especially, we think of a young father whose wife and family faced sorrow with dignity and a courage of their own. America still misses our 35th President, and Laura and I join our fellow citizens in honoring the memory of John Fitzgerald Kennedy.

NOTE: This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

**Proclamation 7738—Thanksgiving
Day, 2003**

November 21, 2003

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

Each year on Thanksgiving, we gather with family and friends to thank God for the many blessings He has given us, and we ask God

to continue to guide and watch over our country.

Almost 400 years ago, after surviving their first winter at Plymouth, the Pilgrims celebrated a harvest feast to give thanks. George Washington proclaimed the first National Day of Thanksgiving in 1789, and Abraham Lincoln revived the tradition during the Civil War. Since that time, our citizens have paused to express thanks for the bounty of blessings we enjoy and to spend time with family and friends. In want or in plenty, in times of challenge or times of calm, we always have reasons to be thankful.

America is a land of abundance, prosperity, and hope. We must never take for granted the things that make our country great: a firm foundation of freedom, justice, and equality; a belief in democracy and the rule of law; and our fundamental rights to gather, speak, and worship freely.

These liberties do not come without cost. Throughout history, many have sacrificed to preserve our freedoms and to defend peace around the world. Today, the brave men and women of our military continue this noble tradition. These heroes and their loved ones have the gratitude of our Nation.

On this day, we also remember those less fortunate among us. They are our neighbors and our fellow citizens, and we are committed to reaching out to them and to all of those in need in our communities.

This Thanksgiving, we again give thanks for all of our blessings and for the freedoms we enjoy every day. Our Founders thanked the Almighty and humbly sought His wisdom and blessing. May we always live by that same trust, and may God continue to watch over and bless the United States of America.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim Thursday, November 27, 2003, as a National Day of

Thanksgiving. I encourage Americans to gather in their homes, places of worship, and community centers to share the spirit of understanding and prayer and to reinforce ties of family and community.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-first day of November, in the year of our Lord two thousand three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-eighth.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 10:46 a.m., November 24, 2003]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on November 25. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language version of this proclamation. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Remarks on Arrival From the United Kingdom

November 21, 2003

Good evening. Laura and I have just returned from Great Britain, where we had a fantastic trip. Her Majesty the Queen was a great host. Of course, we spent some time today in Tony Blair's constituency, which was not only a lot of fun, but it was a chance to continue our dialog about how to fight and defeat terror. We've got a special relationship with Great Britain. That relationship was reaffirmed during the last 3 days.

Back here at home, I'm pleased that the Congress passed the Healthy Forests Initiative, which will help us maintain our national treasure, our forests, again providing a commonsense strategy and making sure that the fire hazards that we've seen over the last couple of summers are mitigated as best as possible.

Secondly, I was pleased that House of Representatives passed an energy bill. This Nation needs an energy bill. It needs an energy plan. A minority of Senators are holding it up. For the sake of our national security and economic security, the Senate has got to pass this bill.

And finally, as you know, the Medicare legislation is—will be debated tonight in the House of Representatives and eventually in the Senate. It is an important time for Members of the U.S. Congress to honor our obligations to our seniors by providing a modern Medicare system, a system that includes prescription drugs and choices for our seniors. I urge the House and the Senate to pass this good piece of legislation.

We're glad to be home. It's good to see you all. Good night. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:27 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Queen Elizabeth II and Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Proclamation 7739—National Family Week, 2003

November 21, 2003

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

As Americans gather during Thanksgiving week, we honor our families, and we recognize the family as a source of help, hope, and stability for our citizens and for our country.

Strong families make our Nation better. They teach our children values and help them become responsible citizens. We must encourage families to be loving and compassionate, generous and supportive, and to serve and help others.

On this Thanksgiving week, we also pay respect to our brave military families whose loved ones are on active duty, many on the front lines of freedom in Iraq and Afghanistan. These families provide a bond of love and encouragement to our men and women in uniform as they defend liberty and protect our Nation.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim November 23 through November 29, 2003, as National